2/-

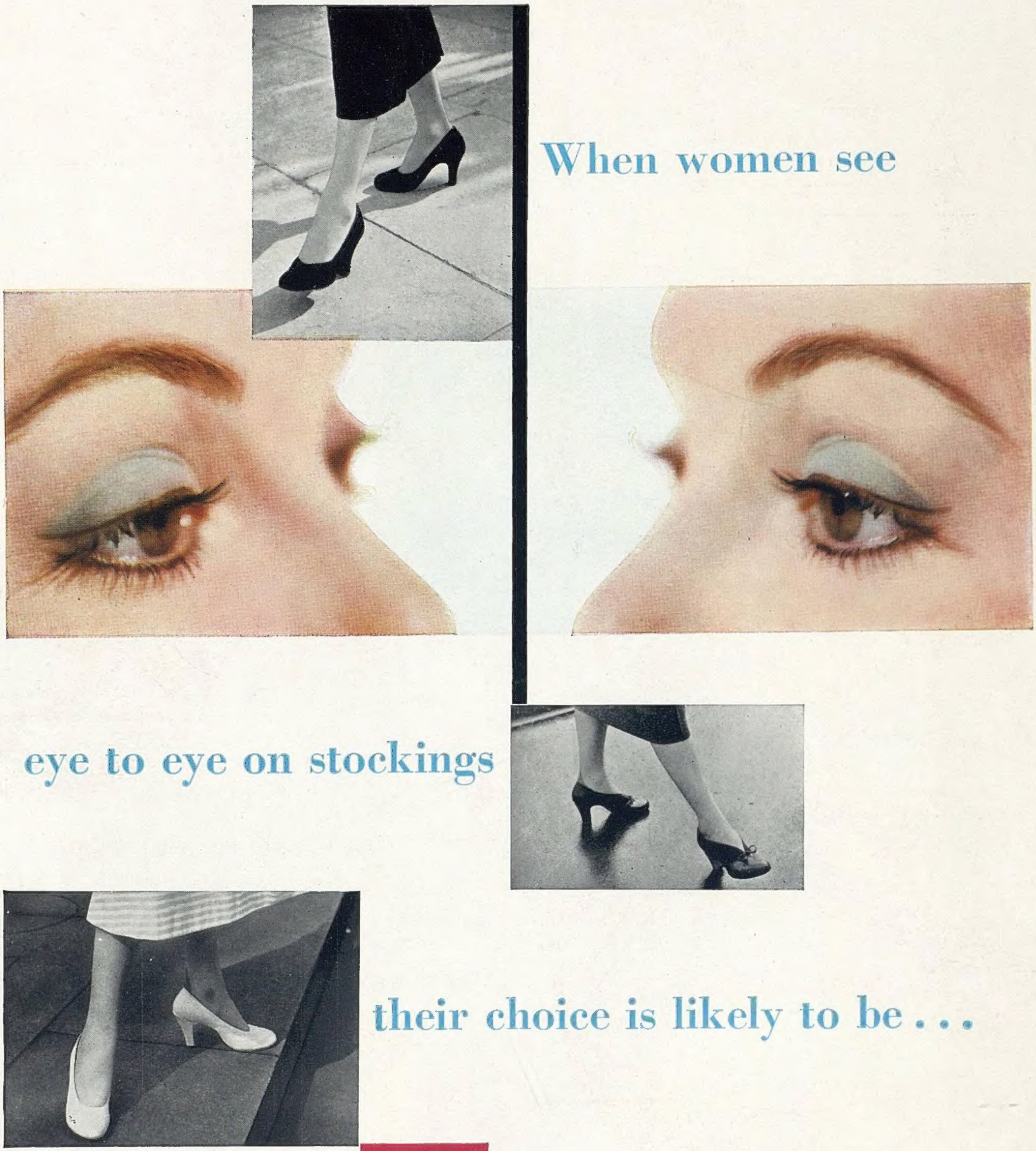
The Sketch

SPRING FASHION NUMBER

PORTRAIT OF MARA LANE

By Jean Gabriel Domergue

No. 2854 Vol. CCXX (Registered as a newspaper for transmission in the United Kingdom.) FEBRUARY 24, 1954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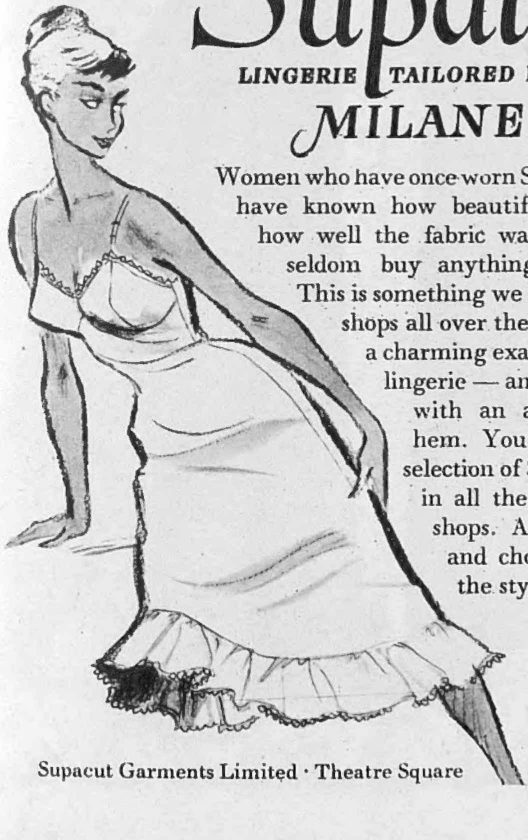

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These people are well prepared for the weather.

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The woman's suit in fancy worsted is available at £35.12.0.; her champagne rayon crepe blouse at £2.3.11. and the stitched Gabardine hat, (in many shades) at £4.9.2. For protection against showers she carries a Burberry in coloured Gabardine, price £15.18.5.

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'1610'

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The new Princess line—sleek and unbroken — needs a smooth foundation . . . needs Youthlines corselette '1610'.

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'1610' is made in white only, stitched in a pale pastel shade on the front panel. Side-front zip fastening. Do see it. At good shops everywhere.

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The Sketch

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1954.

Postage—Inland, 2d.; Canada, 1½d.; Elsewhere Abroad, 2½d.

HOSTESS TO THE QUEEN

It has been arranged that this week H.M. the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh should spend a night with Mrs. R. G. O'Connor and her son, Mr. Roderic O'Connor, at their beautiful home in Cressy, Tasmania. "Connorville," which has been in the O'Connor family since 1824 and is one of the finest sheep stations in the country, is well known to His Royal Highness, who stayed there when he was a junior officer serving in H.M.S. *Whelp*. *(From the painting by Richard Marientreu.)*

FOUR HUNDRED YEARS A-GROWING. In 1553, Alderman Dauntsey founded a school at what is now the little village of West Lavington, under the lip of Salisbury Plain. Recently the School celebrated its four hundredth anniversary at a dinner given by the Old Dauntseians' Association at the Waldorf Hotel, to which we were glad to send our artist, Hargrave. The Minister of Education referred to the progress of the school since 1919, when Mr. G. W. Olive, C.B.E., the present Headmaster, took up his post; it has grown from fewer than a hundred scholars to three hundred, and again this year a new building is to be opened.

Our Motley Notes

By TOBY O'BRIEN

AFTER the recent vagaries of the weather, if ever anybody hears me remarking snootily and patronisingly that "the trouble about the Americans is that they mistake plumbing for civilisation," they are at liberty to hit me over the head with this column. It is possible that for the very highly cultivated, who live in ivory towers (with inside piping), this attitude may be understandable.

Plumbing—*more Americano*—may not be of vital importance to the enjoyment of the higher things of the mind, but anyone who has suffered during the recent freeze will appreciate the great contribution to the comfort of mankind made by our American cousins. One can only assume that British house-builders (who normally include a plumbing branch in their activities) have, in the last seventy or eighty years, during which the hip-bath has gone out of fashion, made their piping arrangements either with a sublime and indifferent optimism with regard to the possibility of cold weather, or with a plumber's eye to the main chance and some profitable work after every cold spell. Otherwise there can be no possible excuse for the insanity of outside piping and tanks on the roof.

The malign genius who installed my water tank many years ago excelled himself. Not content with putting it on the roof, he cunningly put it on stilts, so as to ensure that the freezing winds could attack it, not merely from the sides and the top, but from underneath as well. Will the "blear-eyed chemists"—as Sir Winston Churchill once so unkindly described the scientists—take time off from their destructive activities, and find the solution to O'Brien's First and Second Laws: that a thaw always comes about three o'clock in the morning on a Saturday/Sunday night, and that the worst flooding is always in those rooms which have been most recently redecorated?

APART from the fact that only one tap in the basement remained uncongealed (this took a great deal out of the other members of my household), I must confess that I enjoy hard weather. Indeed, had it been possible to foresee it, we might have been able to announce in the words of pantomimesters: "And now—Our Motley Notes on Ice!" For on the very day before the thaw (it would be !), I was induced to buy a pair of skates, and take to the ice in St. James's Park. I am glad to say that in spite of an interval of some fifteen years, the predictions of the young, painfully overheard, that "This is going to be funny," were not wholly fulfilled, and that, indeed, some passably elegant "threes" were described by your columnist.

What a pleasant thing is skating in the open air! In the Alps, with ski-ing available, it never occurs to one to skate, but I do recall that, in the days when I could do it, waltzing on ice was delightful. In the great freeze-up of 1929, which lasted for several weeks, I remember (such is youth, and *Eheu fugaces*!) that two

friends of mine and I used to get up at seven o'clock in the morning and drive out in Ross Somerville's little Austin "Seven" to Blenheim, and skate for an hour or so on the Great Lake before an enormous breakfast at the "Bear." I do not think that I have ever felt so well in my life as I did then.

I remember an uncle of mine, the late M. R. Lyndon White, telling me that when he was an undergraduate in the great freeze of 1896, he and some friends skated all the way from Oxford to Westminster, having, of course, to circumnavigate the locks and weirs. That was the year when they roasted a sheep on the Thames, which has always seemed to me to be an incredible feat.

My uncle was a remarkable man, who swam for England at the Olympic Games, played lawn tennis for England, and was probably one of the finest fishermen since Izaak Walton. His single day's dry-fly fishing record stood for many years, and I imagine must still stand. It was established at Blagdon in 1904 and consisted of twenty trout, weighing 96 lb. (My brother has, I think, still got a photograph of this phenomenal catch.)

As a boy at Harrow, my uncle was a friend of Sir Winston Churchill, and while at Oxford used to go over to Blenheim to fish with the future Prime Minister. The old Duke of Marlborough promised the undergraduate and the subaltern a "fiver" if they could each catch a 20-lb. pike in the Great Lake, which abounded in enormous fish. Lyndon White got his, but Sir Winston's fish fell short by a pound or two. A "fiver" was even more of a "fiver" to a subaltern in those days than it is now, and somehow or other—such is the well-known voracity of pike—the great key of the entrance gates to Blenheim appeared to have been swallowed by the pike shortly before it went on to the scales! Another story of how a pike got in among the goldfish in Mercury in Tom Quad is, however, so wholly disgraceful that I forbear to repeat it.

ROSS SOMERVILLE, of whom I have long, alas, lost sight, had the most remarkable gift for spontaneous macaronic verse. He would take all notes at lectures in this medium, and anything I can still remember about Victor Hugo, for example, is due to these notes. Thus, if the lecturer said: "The life of Victor Hugo, who was born in 1802, covered the whole of the rise and fall of the Romantic Movement, as, when he died and his body was exposed at the Arc de Triomphe in 1885, it was just entering on its decline," Ross would scribble:

Victor Hugo (1802)
Saw the Romantic Movement through.
And continued (much alive)
Until exposed (Arc) '85.

And if the lecturer then went on to say that in 1811 he went to Madrid and visited the tomb of El Cid Campeador, Ross's note would read:

In 'eleven to Madrid,
Much impressed—
Tombeau du Cid.

Returning to the subject of ice, I happened—a rare event with me—to look in at the Television screening of *Sinbad on Ice* the other night. As my regular readers will know, I mourn the passing of the great traditional pantomimes of the Lyceum type, with their magnificent couplets and superb knock-about comedy, in favour of glorified musical comedy. I must confess, however, that these ice spectacles are a wholly new and delightful art form, which is totally unrelated to anything one has encountered before. However, even the traditional pantomime couplet was not totally lacking. So much so, that I believe that even the most hardened Lyceum librettist might have winced away from the rhyme (*sic*) delivered by the Old Man of the Sea (or whoever it was) that

When nightfall
Is just a trifle . . . .

The Tribulations of Tanya

By Anna Zinkeisen and Laurel Pascal

A girl is taught at Mother's knee
To dress for cocktails, lunch or tea:
But who can guide a girl to-day
In dressing for the latest Play?

A COMBINATION of circumstances led me to the Amusement Trades Exhibition. Alas, by the time this appears it will be over, for I would have strongly recommended it to anyone with a nice taste in fantasy. The majority of the exhibitors struck me as being "characters in search of an author"—palpably in this case Mr. Graham Greene—and looking at some of them I should have been most hesitant to try to muscle in on their "swag stand" (I believe that is the correct term).

At the Exhibition I met Miss June Whitfield, the radio and television star, and together with some mutual friends, we went off to lunch. Miss Whitfield is, if she will pardon the expression, quite a dish. I hope she will forgive me, however, if I reveal that, such is my ignorance of such matters, I had no clear idea what she did until a friendly attendant in the "gents' cloaks" at the Hyde Park Hotel was able to brief me. I hope, too, that the knowledge I subsequently displayed on the subject of "Take It From Here" got by!

I have already, I think, revealed that when a certain famous transatlantic woman novelist makes her annual visit to this country, and her publisher, who is a friend of mine, asks me to support him at dinner, I get my dear, well-informed cook-housekeeper Eva to provide me with a short synopsis of her latest book, which I palm. This enables me to show what I hope is a convincing acquaintance with her works. (I do not go so far, however, as Denzil Batchelor, who is barefaced, and who on one occasion at a cocktail party in her honour burst out into an apparently spontaneous eulogy of her hat—though, on second thoughts, perhaps the initial phrase, "That is the most wonderful hat I have ever seen!" might not have been altogether far off the mark!)

THE late Sir George Hamilton, M.P. for many years for Ilford (and, as his friends would agree, a somewhat choleric legislator), prided himself particularly on his cellar of '96 port. Every year it was his genial habit to invite the Mayor and Corporation of Ilford, plus their ladies, to his country house near Saxmundham.

On one occasion the statuesque butler said to the Mayoress: "Port, madam?"

The Mayoress refused, whereupon Sir George turned to her and said: "Oh, but Madam Mayoress, you really should try this. It is something very special. It is Cockburn '96."

"Oh, well, Sir George," was her reply: "Just to please you." Then turning to the butler, she said: "Young fellah, I 'll just have a little of this in me lemon."

History with her irritating reticence does not relate what happened in the next few seconds. Sir George, however, miraculously survived the incident by many years.

A FRIEND recently offered a reward for a missing picture by a well-known artist, of a famous dog. He was inundated with correspondence from those who were sure that they had exactly the thing. One lady was so positive that she had the picture that my friend wrote to her enquiring whether it was in oils or water-colour. "I am afraid," the reply came back, "that I don't know enough about Art to tell you, but" (she added hopefully), "it's *quite* unlike my other picture—which is roses."

ABOUT OUR COVER

Our cover for this issue brings together two well-known personalities—Jean Gabriel Domergue, who is celebrated for his portraits of beautiful ladies, and that lovely young British actress, Mara Lane. Mara was recently seen in the comedy "Innocents in Paris," and is at present filming in Hollywood.

Little Chloë Glover, "Alice" for the occasion, presents a white posy to Mrs. H. Eeles, arriving here with her husband, Air Commodore H. Eeles, Commandant at Cranwell.

Air Commodore R. Grice and Mrs. R. C. Keary.

Squadron-Leader D. R. Ware and Mrs. Ware.

Flt.-Lieut. L. J. Clancy, Flt.-Lieut. F. Leckie, Mrs. Clancy and Miss Barbara Mitchell.

Applauding the R.A.F. Band: Mrs. E. D. MacK. Nelson and Air Marshal Sir John Baldwin.

An attractive threesome the photographer found chatting between dances: Mrs. P. E. Newman, Mrs. J. G. Armstrong and Mrs. W. P. Sutcliffe.

Senior Service guest, Lieut.-Commander J. Holt, with Mrs. and Mr. R. P. Burrowes and Mrs. Holt.

"Alice" Joins the R.A.F. at Cranwell

Miss Eileen Davies and Mr. Julian Ellis.

Group-Captain R. C. Keary and Mrs. R. Grice.

The "court scene" formed the background for Squadron-Leader R. D. A. Smith, Mrs. J. W. Peyton, Mrs. R. D. A. Smith and Major J. W. Peyton.

In the "Duchess's kitchen": Miss Shirley Gray, Wing-Commander A. E. Davey, Mrs. and Squadron-Leader L. C. Glover and Mrs. and Squadron-Leader R. F. Sweeting.

Mrs. J. Mynors with Squadron-Leader and Mrs. D. W. Bedford.

Flt.-Lieut. P. Hunt, Mrs. D. Merrifield, Mrs. R. Simmons and Flt.-Lieut. J. Dawes.

The two "Alice" books were the theme of the winter ball at the R.A.F. station at Cranwell on February 5th. The entrance hall was decorated as the "Chess Garden," and lady guests were all presented on their arrival with a white or red posy by six-year-old Chloë Glover, daughter of Squadron-Leader and Mrs. L. C. Glover, who made a delightful little "Alice." Bars were named after well-known scenes from the Lewis Carroll story, the Ante Room was decorated as the "Court of Justice," and oysters and champagne were served in the "Walrus and Carpenter" bar. Officers who had used considerable ingenuity and not a little work in making the decorations were heartily congratulated by all the guests, many of whom had braved several miles of icy roads to attend the ball.

Photographed by Van Hallan.

Wing-Commander and Mrs. F. R. Flynn, Squadron-Leader V. Bridges, Mrs. and Lieut.-Commander R. B. Lunberg and Mrs. Bridges.

Our Bookshelf

TO THE WOOD NO MORE. By Ernest Raymond. (*Cassell and Co., Ltd.* ; 12s. 6d.)

CHILDREN IN THE HOUSE. By Nan Fairbrother. (*The Hogarth Press* ; 12s. 6d.)

SET ALL AFIRE. By Louis de Wohl. (*Victor Gollancz, Ltd.* ; 12s. 6d.)

Reviewed by G. B. Stern

POSSIBLY Mr. Ernest Raymond would call his *recherche du temps perdu*, set in St. John's Wood during the mellow days of King Edward VII., a "period piece"; yet it is also a "character piece" about a man who is only half a humbug. Molière and Meredith both achieved portraits of a complete egoist, of a man with a psychological compulsion to refer everything back to himself; but Sir Albany Grahame, erstwhile Rector of Mosgrove-St. Neots, can every now and then catch himself out in this very thing, and the outcome of his desperate endeavour to eliminate Sir Albany from the centre of the life of Sir Albany may be set at rather less than 50 per cent. successful:

> *One should be shocked when a brother dies by his own hand, and especially so if one is a clergyman in the Church of England; and the Reverend Albany Grahame . . . strove to be properly shocked. And certainly to appear so.*

The "calamity" of his inheritance sets him free to go to London and live like a gentleman; though his strait-laced wife Delia protests at his decision:

> *"When you first came and saw the loveliness of the country, you said it was a dream fulfilled."*
>
> *"I know I did, but . . . I've been fulfilling it now for nearly thirty years, and I want some life for a change."*

As for the nostalgic implications of the title, *To The Wood No More*, we would have said that St. John's Wood, like good wine, needs no bush, but Mr. Raymond thinks otherwise; he is an addict and would make addicts of us all by his loving descriptions of the rollicking Edwardian-Bohemian taverns, of a match at Lord's Cricket Ground, of the houses of famous artists, and of the leafy garden, once the burial-ground of St. John's Chapel, where Sir Albany frequently paces rapt in umbrageous melancholy.

Children in the House provides a delightful let-off from any rigid compulsion to begin a book at the beginning and go straight through to the end, except for those who (inexplicably) feel they are qualifying for a murderer's cell if they open it anywhere at any page, dodge about backwards and forwards and sideways, and finally take a rapid survey from Finis to Chapter One, just to make sure that nothing worth while has been left unread. For it would be a pity to forgo sharing the capricious spirit of Nan Fairbrother's excursions into landscape, weather, village character, pictures, poetry, children, houses, flowers—(and in my own case, often and firmly disagreeing with her)—when she goes to live in a sixteenth-century farm-house alone with her two little boys, while her husband has to be abroad; there she receives a thousand new thoughts and vivid impressions to enliven a volume which is not exactly memoirs, nor criticism, nor a Commonplace Book, nor autobiography, nor *Leaves from a Countrywoman's Diary*; perhaps, as her younger son John would say, it is a cornucopia—he pronounced it as though it were five separate words: "a cor-nu-co-pi-a's an old cow's horn with apples in it."

Unlike one's usual tendency to take flight with a nervous: "I really *must* be off now," when affectionate mothers repeat the cute things their offspring say and do, I was always so willing to stay and be entertained by Peter and John that I genuinely regretted it when their author—in both senses—passed on to different topics. This, for instance, is Peter:

> *"Shy is when little girls hide against their mother. And they won't talk. And if you talk to them they laugh. And then they cry.*
>
> *Bulls are more shyest. You mustn't even go into the field where bulls are. They don't like it."*

I call it a proper and civilised upbringing when respect for the bulls' shyness can be advanced as an adequate reason for not going into a field with them.

Mrs. Fairbrother has also an instinct, rare in women, for putting first things first, such as letting her presents and rewards always take the form of a new window put in the house. But when, on the other hand, she tells us of her bright idea of giving the children dead mice to play with because "they make such wonderful dolls for dolls' houses," my loud objections, totally unsentimental, could be heard above a road-drill!

And here is a mischievous *bonne-bouche* from the Village Encounter Department, to vindicate her of a possible charge of over-seriousness:

> *Little boys ask always, "Please can you tell me the right time?" Never simply the time, but always the right time, as if we might otherwise invent some quite unlikely time to tease them.*

THOUGH it would never appear on any thriller list, *Set All Afire* is, nevertheless, a thriller of a different kind, an actual history of fantastic accomplishment against odds, now set down in the form of a novel, though the complete opposite of Thackeray's Novel Without a Hero. For it has a hero, and his very name is dramatic: St. Francis Xavier, the greatest missionary since St. Paul. Louis de Wohl's title gives us his theme in three words; and, indeed, he has done this before, in *The Living Wood*, for example, which is the story of St. Helena's search for the True Cross; and in *The Quiet Light*, to my mind his finest work, on the life and personality of St. Thomas Aquinas.

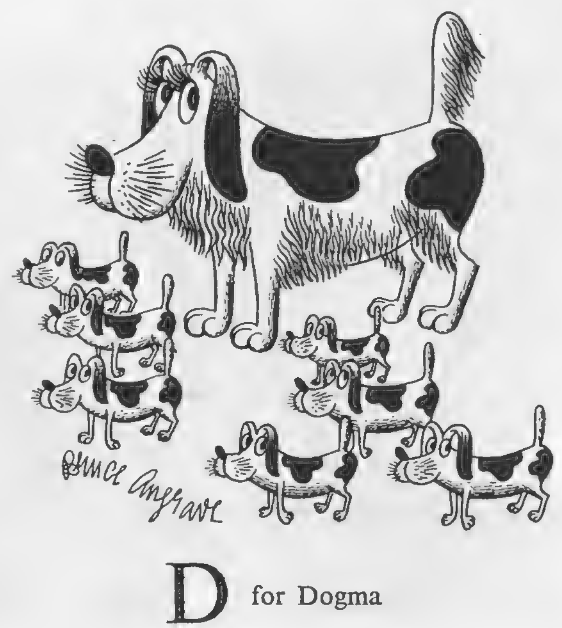
In the first half of this book, set in Paris among the intellectual princes of Montaigu College, our attention is chiefly held by the manifest quality of the hero's hero, a mendicant cripple, no longer young, who was one day to be known to the whole Christian world as St. Ignatius Loyola. By some mysterious power he was able to set afire the enthusiasm of his fellow-students and use them as a nucleus for the first Company of Jesuits, the Order of absolute obedience:

> *Once, when they were talking about it, he said slowly, haltingly, "We are in the company of Jesus, to be sure. But we are also His company. His soldiers."*
>
> *Francis' eyes sparkled. To him, the descendant of generations of soldiers, there was a clarion call in the words.*

In wishing that Louis de Wohl need not have made his narrative gleam and glitter and flash with martial splendour, I am certainly not accusing him of being meretricious; he was tempted to load his tale with all the riches that research had uncovered for him; yet where the beauty of bare line is enough, must it be obscured?

And this author's excelling "bare line" is revelation of the power of the spirit. This, however, may sound as though I were pleading with him to write sober, straightforward biography instead of truth in the guise of fiction; and it would be ungracious, perhaps churlish, to cavil at a choice which might attract multitudinous readers who would otherwise suspect austerity and dullness in a saint's Career Story, and thus miss hearing how St. Francis Xavier went out to convert the Indies and Japan, and of his lonely death on an island within sight of China, his ultimate goal.

ANGRAVE'S ALPHABET



D for Dogma

YOUR LIBRARY LIST

SOMEONE AT A DISTANCE.
By Dorothy Whipple. (*John Murray* ; 12s. 6d.)

SIMPLE TAKES A WIFE.
By Langston Hughes. (*Victor Gollancz, Ltd.* ; 12s. 6d.)

QUEEN VICTORIA'S RELATIONS.
By Meriel Buchanan. (*Cassell and Co.* ; 18s.)

THE LONG SHIPS.
By Frans Bengtsson. (*Collins* ; 15s.)

Specially drawn for "THE SKETCH" by Anton.

"BUT, DARLING, YOU DID SAY DON'T BOTHER TO DRESS."

Miss Susan Clark, younger daughter of Sir Andrew Clark, Q.C., and Lady Clark, of 33, Thurloe Square, S.W.7, is at present completing her education in Paris but will be returning to London in time for the March Courts and is being presented by her mother, who is giving a dance for her at Hutchinson House on July 8th.

Miss Jane Ingram, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Mervyn Ingram, Hill House, Langport, Somerset. Her grandmother, Mrs. Guy Cross, is giving a dance with Mrs. Maude-Roxby on May 25th for Miss Ingram and Mrs. Maude-Roxby's two daughters. Miss Ingram is being presented at Court in March by her mother.

Miss Fiona Lomax, eldest daughter of Major Cecil and the Hon. Mrs. Lomax, of Codicote Mill, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, is being presented by her mother in March. Mrs. Lomax is giving a cocktail party for her in London on April 22nd.

Miss Belinda Maclean, elder daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Donald C. Maclean, 30, Thurloe Square, S.W.7, will be presented in March by her mother. Mrs. Maclean is giving a joint dance for her and Gillian Buckley in London on May 18th with Mrs. Francis Buckley.

Four Débutantes

CONVERSATION PIECE

From the painting by Doris Zinkeisen, exhibited at the Fine Art Galleries.

D

COUNTRY DANCE AT FALAISE. 1906.
(From the collection of Mme. Bourdon, Paris.)

DEAUVILLE : LA SORTIE DES SIX-MÈTRES. 1935.
(From the collection of Mrs. Anthony Crossley.)

THE DUFY EXHIBITION

Raoul Dufy died on March 23rd, 1953, and a memorial exhibition of his work was held at the Tate Gallery this year. By the courtesy of the owners and of the Tate Gallery, we reproduce two pictures from that exhibition as our own tribute to a great painter.

Photographed by Yevonde.

LADY NORTHAMPTON AND HER CHILDREN

A *very human* study of Lady Northampton, wife of the Marquess of Northampton, with her four children: Spencer, Earl Compton, aged eight; Lord William, seven; Lady Judith, ten; and Lady Elizabeth, nine. The Marquess and Marchioness, who were married in 1942, divide their time between the two beautiful Compton family seats, Castle Ashby, in Northampton, and Compton Wynyates, at Tysoe, in Warwickshire, two of the oldest inhabited homes in England. Lord Northampton is Deputy Lieutenant for Ross and Cromarty and for Northants, Chairman of the Northants County Council and patron of nine livings. Lady Northampton finds time in a busy life for golf, which she took up only eighteen months ago, and is already the champion woman golfer for Northampton.

Our Social Diary

DURING the month of February, mothers with débutante daughters are busy giving luncheon parties at which they make and exchange dates for the dances and parties for the coming season. Many of the girls who are to make their *début* are still completing their education abroad or in this country, but all will have returned home in time to attend the Presentation Courts which are being held on March 24th and 25th.

One of the youngest of this year's débutantes is Miss Jane Ingram, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Mervyn Ingram, who live in Somerset. Small, dark and vivacious, Jane is staying in London for the season with her grandmother, Mrs. Guy Cross, who is giving a dance for her at Hutchinson House on May 25th, with Mrs. Maude-Roxby for her two daughters, Audrey and Lorna.

To welcome her granddaughter to London, Mrs. Cross gave a cocktail party at her flat, and, when I arrived, I found the drawing-room filled to overflowing with young people, some parents, and friends of the family. After greeting Mrs. Cross, I spoke to Jane, who looked very sweet in a pale-blue brocade skirt with a black velvet blouse, and I also met her mother with her twin sister, Mrs. Christopher Dalgety, whose son Alexander was also at the party. Among the young girls were Miss Susan Combe, who came with her grandmother, Lady Symonds, Miss Janet Chaplin, who looked charming in grey, Miss Patsy Ainley, Miss Susan Gainsford St. Lawrence and Miss Wordie, whose father is President of the Royal Geographical Society and Master of St. John's College, Cambridge. Also present was Miss Diana Cross, whose father, Sir Ronald Cross, has entertained H.M. the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh at Government House, Tasmania. Mrs. Francis Hopkinson brought her attractive daughter, Anne, and Mr. and Mrs. Desmond Boyle, their pretty daughter, Carina, who is also coming out this year. The young men included Prince Alexander Romanoff, Mr. Jonathan Balcon, Mr. Peter Clarke, Mr. Patrick Browne and Mr. Christopher Courtauld.

Among the many other guests enjoying this excellent party were Admiral Lord Fraser of North Cape, Sir Weldon and Lady Dalrymple-Champneys, Lord and Lady Mountevans, Mr. Charles Doughty, M.P., with his wife and daughter, and Lady Ley with her two attractive step-granddaughters. I think I should also mention another important guest, the minute white Pekingese owned by Mrs. Cross, who rejoices in the altogether enchanting name of Cheri Bili Ho seen Koo!

ANOTHER of this year's débutantes is Miss Vanda Arbuthnot, daughter of Captain and Mrs. Clive Arbuthnot, who is at present enjoying the sunshine with her parents in Jamaica. They are returning home shortly as Mrs. Arbuthnot is to present her daughter at Court and will also be giving a dance for her with Lady St. John of Bletso at Hutchinson House, on May 31st.

I went to a delightful luncheon party recently given by Lady St. John, who is a born hostess and loves giving parties for young people as well as entertaining friends of her own generation. At luncheon that day her guests were Princess Galitzine, the Hon. Mrs. Henry Milles-Lade, the Hon. Mrs. Charles Rhys, the Hon. Mrs. Denis Stucley and Mrs. Philip Martin and Mrs. Patrick Brunner, who are both bringing out their daughters, Jane Martin and April Brunner, this year.

H.R.H. PRINCESS MARGARET is to attend the concert which is being held on March 8th at the Royal Festival Hall in aid of the National Fund for Poliomyelitis Research. A final committee meeting at which the Earl of Westmorland, as Chairman, presided, was held at the Spanish Embassy, and the kindness of H.E. the Ambassador in permitting this was coupled with his wonderfully generous gesture in also giving a reception for members of the committee and their friends.

On arrival we were received by the Ambassador, and after enjoying some delicious refreshments, we moved to the adjoining ballroom, where chairs had been placed in readiness for the meeting. After speeches by Lord Westmorland and Mr. Duncan Guthrie, Director of the Fund, a brisk trade was done in selling tickets for the concert, at which Sir Adrian Boult will conduct the London Philharmonic Orchestra in a programme of music by Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms. Franz Osborn is the soloist.

H.E. the Ambassador attended the meeting and later told me that the beautiful paintings in the ballroom were by the eighteenth-century Spanish artist Bayeu.

Among the many guests, the Countess of Westmorland looked outstandingly lovely, wearing a black satin dress and a pale blue ribboned cap, trimmed with tiny bunches of flowers. I also saw Lord Plunket, the Hon. Mrs. John Wills, Mrs. Douglas Fairbanks, Mr. Henry Garnett (who arrived with Lady

IRISH CHRISTENING. The second son of the Earl and Countess of Mount Charles was christened at St. Patrick's Parish Church, Slane, County Meath, and was given the name of Simon Charles Eveleigh Conyngham. Lord and Lady Mount Charles live at Slane Castle, on the River Boyne, which is famed for its salmon. Slane Castle has been the home of the Conyngham family since the seventeenth century, and was visited by George IV., who was an ardent admirer of the famous Lady Conyngham, to whom he gave many of

QUEEN'S CHAPEL WEDDING. The Queen Mother, Princess Margaret and the Duchess of Gloucester attended the wedding of Major the Hon. Christopher Beckett, seen here with his bride, the former Lady Elizabeth Lumley, second daughter of the Earl and Countess of Scarbrough.

ANGLO-AMERICAN WEDDING. The former Miss Amanda Stenson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Stenson, of Dukes Lodge, Holland Park, with her bridegroom, Captain Harlen L. Davis, United States Air Force, after their marriage which took place at St. Paul's, Knightsbridge.

Elizabeth Clyde and Lady Edith Foxwell), Mrs. Susan Ward, looking very pretty in a black skirt with a white blouse, the Hon. Rodney Berry, and Colonel and Mrs. Peter Laycock. Tickets for the concert may be obtained from the usual agencies.

FROM the reception at the Spanish Embassy I went straight on to the Academy Cinema, which has been closed for decoration and had a welcome reopening with the showing of the French film *The Wages of Fear*. This is a truly magnificent film and has been reviewed by C. A. Lejeune on page 152 of this issue.

H.E. the French Ambassador and Madame Massigli were present and were joined by Mary, Duchess of Roxburghe and Mr. Michael Renshaw. Lady Churchill, wearing a black velvet coat trimmed with ermine, came with her son-in-law, Mr. Anthony Beauchamp, and others in the audience included H.H. the Maharanee of Baroda, and Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Legge, the latter wearing the most beautiful black velvet crinoline dress. Earlier, I had seen her at the reception at the Embassy.

WHEN President Eisenhower was still Supreme Commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Forces in Europe, he was painted by the late Sir Oswald Birley, whose intention it was to present the portrait to the President after having done a replica for himself. Unfortunately Sir Oswald died before being able to accomplish this.

The portrait remained in Lady Birley's possession until recently, when a number of friends and admirers thought of the excellent idea of presenting the portrait to the American nation as a tribute to one of its greatest citizens. Also, of having a replica painted for the President to keep for himself. A committee was formed which included Sir Winston Churchill, Earl Alexander of Tunis, Sir William Morgan, and the Hon. James Smith, who was appointed Treasurer. The committee succeeded in raising sufficient funds for this purpose and also have the intention if possible of restoring the interior of the beautiful twelfth-century Saxon church at West Dean, Sussex, where Sir Oswald lived, and is buried. Some money is still needed and being collected for the latter project.

Before the portrait and the replica were despatched to America, these were exhibited at the Earl and Countess of Haddington's house in Chelsea. When I called there, Lady Birley, one of the most lovely and charming of women, was receiving visitors in Lady Haddington's beautiful drawing-room, which was at one time Sargent's studio. The portrait of President Eisenhower, painted in general's uniform, is probably one of the finest of Sir Oswald's works, and the replica has been admirably executed by John Leigh-Pemberton. I also enjoyed seeing another of Sir Oswald's portraits, the one of Lady Haddington, hanging over the fireplace; it does full justice to her beauty.

Among the distinguished visitors who came to see the portraits that day were Earl and Countess Alexander, Sir William Morgan, the Earl and Countess of Hardwicke, Sir Ronald Storrs, Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Pritchard, and Sir Shane Leslie. The portraits have now been despatched to the British Embassy in Washington, though it has not yet been decided where the portrait of the President by Sir Oswald Birley is to hang.

Photos: Charles Fennell.

the Crown Jewels. Lady Mount Charles was formerly Miss Eileen Wren Newsam, and is a descendant of Sir Christopher Wren. She married Lord Mount Charles in 1950. *Extreme left:* Lady Mount Charles with the baby. *Left:* Lady Lambert, Lord Mount Charles and Mrs. John Shirley. *Right:* Mrs. Edward Thompson, Captain C. W. Newsam (father of Lady Mount Charles) and Dr. Edward Thompson. *Extreme right:* Viscount Slane, the elder son of Lord and Lady Mount Charles.

ALSO AT ST. PAUL'S. Mr. and Mrs. John Prentice after their wedding at St. Paul's, Knightsbridge. The bride, the former Miss Geraldine Tomalin, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Humphrey Tomalin, of 46, Cadogan Place, London. She wore her grandmother's wedding veil.

LONDON WEDDING. Mr. Timothy Brinton with his bride, the former Miss Jane-Mari Coningham, daughter of the late Air Marshal Sir Arthur Coningham and Lady Coningham, leaving St. Michael's Church, Chester Square, after their wedding. Mr. Brinton is a B.B.C. announcer and news reader.

Incidentally, I must take this opportunity of saying how sorry I am that in our last issue, in our caption to the picture showing the portrait of the Queen by the late Douglas Chandor, hanging in the Embassy at Washington, Mrs. Douglas Chandor was wrongly described as Lady Makins.

A DRESS show of special interest to the débutantes of this year is being given on March 1st by Miss Belinda Belville and Mrs. Sydna Scott, who together started a dress shop recently. Miss Belville is the daughter of Mr. Tony Belville and of Mrs. Peter Pleydell-Bouverie. The show is being held at the home of Miss Belville's grandmother, Mrs. Gordon Leith. Among the young girls showing the models will be Lady Rose Bligh, Miss Sarah Chester-Beatty, Miss Margaret-Ann Du Cane and Miss Davina Portman, who announced her engagement recently to Mr. Peter West. Miss Portman will be showing the wedding-dress of the collection.

I WENT to the reception held by the Board of the Royal Hospital and Home for Incurables, Putney, for the Duke of Devonshire, who is the Hospital's new President on the retirement of Lord Clifden. The Hospital, which is entirely supported by voluntary contributions, is celebrating its centenary and is starting a five-year-plan during which they hope to raise sufficient funds to become entirely self-supporting.

The Duke made an excellent speech and stressed the fact that one of the main objects is to provide a permanent home for the patients, many of whom are able to leave their beds daily and enjoy the use of the reception rooms and dining-rooms.

An all-star variety concert is being held on March 14th at the Albert Hall, the proceeds of which will go towards the Hospital funds.

Among the guests at the reception I saw Lord Courtauld-Thomson, who is Vice-President of the Hospital with the Marquess of Bristol, Brigadier R. M. Villiers, who is Secretary to the Hospital, and his wife, Mrs. Villiers, who looked charming in black velvet, and Sir Francis Glynn, Treasurer, who was awarded a knighthood in the New Year Honours, and received the accolade at the recent investiture.

MR. BILL PILKINGTON, Captain Miles Gosling and Mr. Alan Budgett are to be Joint-Masters of the Bicester Hunt when the present Joint-Masters, Mrs. Mostyn and Mr. Beloe, give up at the end of this season. The Hunt Ball on March 19th promises to be one of the gayest of its kind, and it is being held this year at Tusmore Park, the beautiful home of Lord and Lady Bicester.

Helena

Strictly Biographical : 3.

By Louis T. Stanley

John Masefield, O.M.

POET LAUREATE

THE duties of the Poet Laureate are open to debate. The popular view is that the public expect him to signalise in verse any occurrence of national importance. The minority identify the office as official recognition of poetic ability with no duty attached to it other than to continue to produce the quality of poetry that earned the award. Tennyson as Laureate was eminently successful in the first rôle. He adapted his powers to public themes by stimulating public imagination without incurring the displeasure of the purists. The precedent was too formidable for his successors. Robert Bridges took a strong line and antagonised the popular Press by arguing that the Laureate should not be expected to write poetic journalism.

When Bridges died in 1930, the Prime Minister had the difficult task of selecting a new Laureate from at least six well-known poets, any of whom could worthily have filled the office. Ramsay MacDonald played safe. He chose a poet of the people, one who was thoroughly English. Even so, John Masefield's succession to the Laureateship had a mixed reception. The reaction was nothing new. When Bridges succeeded Alfred Austin, an able journalist and innocuous versifier, the academic world was delighted, whilst the man-in-the-street asked, "Who *is* Robert Bridges ?" The wheel had come full circle. This time it was the academic world, or more accurately, the pseudo-intelligentsia, that asked with ironic emphasis, "Who *is* John Masefield ?"

The æsthetic school disliked the selection of a realist as Laureate. Their opposition to Masefield was increased because he had made a bold attempt to widen the realistic class of poetry. I admit that he is no poet for those who look for purely æsthetic beauty. Critics who visualise poetry only in terms of static beauty and refuse it any interpretation beyond itself must find it difficult to approach Masefield with sympathy. He deals with a raw, rough world beyond their ken. At times his work is a

contradiction in terms. It is not easy to assess a poet who can mix sublimity, crudeness, bathos and even trite triviality within a few stanzas, or even sometimes in a single stanza itself.

THAT first-class narrative poem, *The Everlasting Mercy*—probably the turning-point in Masefield's career—is his most characteristic achievement. It created a stir in 1911 similar to that produced by *Childe Harold* in 1812, or, perhaps a better parallel, by *Poems and Ballads* in 1886. It is one of the ironies of literary history that two poets as dissimilar as Swinburne and Masefield should have stirred up the same kind of sensation in their respective generations.

The originality and power of this study in conversation are undeniable. In stark realism, it depicts Saul Kane, the blackguard of a small Herefordshire town as he was before his redemption. In those days it was an innovation for poetry to follow a scoundrel into a pub, but actually to reproduce his blasphemies was unthinkable. Bernard Shaw's Eliza Doolittle had yet to shock polite society. Masefield went one better. He not only called a spade a spade, nor even a bloody shovel: he outraged current realism itself with such lines as:

I 'll bloody him a bloody fix
I 'll bloody burn his bloody ricks.

As St. John Adcock commented, no ruffian was ever heard to speak quite so elliptically. Still, it was a step in the right direction. Masefield had achieved the impossible. He had made the British public read contemporary poetry, an event which had not occurred since the death of Tennyson. Here at last was a man who took Synge's advice and infused into his poetry the life he knew. Synge had said that before poetry could be real again, it must learn to be brutal; that there was no true poetry which had not its roots among the clay and the worms. Masefield faithfully followed the prescription and the foundation of his fame was laid.

To-day John Masefield is regarded by half-fledged intellects as antediluvian. Much of the criticism is superficial, part is the reflection of genuine uncertainty. Critics like writers who can be pigeon-holed. Masefield ignores cut-and-dry labels. Rigid traditionalists distrust his experiments. Modernists find him too traditional. Lovers of beauty question his hesitant touch. Those who admire religious lyricism are hurt by his frankness. Masefield's career has been one of extremes, both in his work and the public reaction to it. There has never been any half-measure about the criticism of his writing.

In a way the conflict is linked with the circumstances of his life and his personality. An unhappy childhood in a lovely countryside made him realise the contrast between beauty and the things that mar it. The sea and seafaring folk made a mark upon the impressionable years of adolescence. Youth and early manhood left bitter memories. He had to fend for himself and to live among people who toiled hard for their living by earning his own amongst them. It gave Masefield a lifelong, passionate sympathy with the under-dog and the unprivileged.

For years Masefield worked as a journalist and developed a quick, nervous prose which has affected the whole of his literary activities. His output has been tremendous. His collected poems are bulky. He has written novels and a number of other prose works. The theatre knows him as historian and playwright. To these must be added his official efforts as Poet Laureate, conscientious poetic journalism limited in interest to the occasion that evoked them.

Viewed in their entirety, the standard fluctuates. Honesty compels the admission that Masefield is one of the most uneven writers of this century. That is often a sign of genius. Creative work in large quantities is bound to be uneven. No writer is judged by his minor work. Sibelius produced mighty symphonies. He was also responsible for innumerable *salon* pieces which Sir Arnold Bax described as not even vulgar. Masefield has obvious limitations, but throughout his work one dateless quality persists . . . it is fervour. Hardly a poem is unmarked by it. The feeling sweeps through his writing like a mighty wind, spiced and heavy with sea-salt. Masefield's intermittent genius has been that of a vigorous craftsman who never stopped work for fear of making a mistake.

When Masefield gave of his best and reached the peaks of inspiration, he found the mainspring to be his love of life and compassion for all that live it. In *Reynard the Fox* we have the finest English narrative poem of this century and one of the greatest in our language. In itself it could epitomise a lifetime's work. The subject and setting gave Masefield full scope for all his powers. It is a sustained pæan of fox-hunting. The question of its cruelty is not discussed or even mentioned. The hunt is neither attacked nor defended. It is accepted as a traditional English institution. To the question of why he wrote the poem, Masefield explains that the fox-hunt gives an opportunity for a picture, or pictures, of the members of an English community. At a fox-hunt, and nowhere else in England except perhaps at a funeral, can you see the whole of the land's society brought together, focussed for the observer as the Canterbury pilgrims were for Chaucer. It is impossible to gauge how posterity will assess the poet, but the odds are that this extroverted English poem will survive the years.

In his lifetime John Masefield has been honoured with the Order of Merit, the highest distinction which Britain can offer to one of her sons.

". . . and all I ask is a tall ship. . . ." The poet with a model windjammer he made during his early days at sea.

Here he proudly displays one of the fine pieces of blue-and-white Worcester china which are among his best-loved possessions.

"SKETCH" photographs by Harold White.

AT THE THEATRE with J. C. TREWIN

Curiouser and Curiouser!

The Private Secretary
(*Arts*)

Charley's Aunt
(*New*)

IF Charley is your darling you will find him, remarkably spruce, at the New Theatre, where he has succeeded *Dear Charles* (it is all, like the farce, a little confusing). At the Arts, thirty seconds' scamper away, you will see Mr. Cattermole lifting the Reverend Robert Spalding by the seat of his trousers and carting him out of the room. It is this, maybe, that alarmed the critic who has complained about Spalding's cruel treatment. In the words of Alice, "Curiouser and curiouser!" Speaking as a hardened brute, a square-jawed tough, I enjoyed the old farce. It is merely knock-down nonsense, a slap-happy rattle of gags. But it is both fast and furious: it gets its effects by speed and bravado. And, at the Arts, both Spalding the tormented and Cattermole the tormentor have the proper relishing pounce.

Harold Goodwin has learned the first lessons about Spalding: he keeps his face poker-straight, cuts out the sham-parsonic bleat, and allows himself, with consummate gravity, to be used as a kick-about. I don't know whether I like him better when he fizzes, a jack-in-the-box, from the chest where Cattermole has dumped him, or when he is numbering off from the left his gallimaufry of chat-tels, the Bath-bun, the acidulated drop, the inevitable goloshes. Poor Spalding! How we ought to hate his persecutor, the sadist Cattermole! I have to admit that Cattermole, with his menacing jungle of whisker and his dental flash, seemed to me quite as agreeable as any other Demon King; it is clear that Richard Wordsworth enjoys his storming and bullying. Very well then: "Meet the Rev.", as they used to say in the radio-feature, and pay no attention whatever to an Arts programme-note that sets the scene in 1900. *The Private Secretary*, produced at Cambridge in 1883, reached London in the spring of 1884. Great pip!

As a play it is, of course, inferior to the majestic farces of Pinero. Four or five of these have come up grandly in recent years, and there are still others to try. I wish that one of them had been chosen for sumptuous West End revival instead of *Charley's Aunt* which, between ourselves, is feeling its age. Here I have usually been a heretic. No one will laugh more heartily than I do when Babs pours the tea into Spalding's topper—once more I was disturbed at the New by a "hollow burst of bellowing" that was my own mirth—and the cigar scene is probably as comic now as it was when Brandon Thomas wrote it. But, elsewhere, the old piece is rheumaticky. Although some may vary Lady Bracknell's famous cry, and exclaim: "Not funny! Impossible! They are Oxonians!", I find that the young men make me peevish or, as they say themselves, "jolly waxy."

Not that they are poorly played in the revival. By no means. Everyone in the cast works away at the business as if it were some momentous theatrical occasion. Sir John Gielgud has produced with unfailing style, and when Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies is on the stage we almost forget that the elegant vision is Charley's real aunt in a slap-at-it farce that its author would be much surprised to see in the theatre of 1954. Miss Ffrangcon-Davies is adorable. So, for that matter, are the three girls (Jennifer Wright, Natasha Parry, Joy Rodgers), and you should go to the New to hear Miss Parry as she gently inflates the preposterous balloon of that speech about Oxford's "sculptured nooks." There are several other nice things: the dashin' William Mervyn, the peripatetic Vesuvius that is Philip Stainton (Mount Spettigue in eruption), and the good scout of Eliot Makeham.

"M'YES!" Harold Goodwin as the Reverend Robert Spalding of *The Private Secretary*, grave, long-suffering, acrobatic, waits (at the Arts Theatre) for the wrath to come. With him are his goods and chat-tels: his Bath-bun, his goloshes, and (no doubt) his acidulated drop.

What of Babs, Charley's aunt (the real one, you know)? After all, it is his play. John Mills tosses himself into the part as gallantly as Mr. Goodwin into Spalding at the Arts. He does all he can within the frame of the production; and if I came from the New thinking less of him than of the charming decoration ("Motley" is the designer), and of Donna Lucia and the three girls, that is because Sir John Gielgud, in his treatment of the old farce, has "reformed it altogether," smoothed away its roughnesses, thought of it as a blithe period comedy—curiously suave now and again—rather than as a bit of smack-it-over buffoonery. An endearing night in its way; but I confess, with a sharp glance around, that I laughed with more abandon at the shockin' brutalities of Mr. Cattermole and the persecuted curate. It's the savage streak in me. Snarling, I apologise.

Alice Through the Looking-Glass
(*Princes*)

I WONDER how many people have tried to adapt *Alice* for the stage? It looks so easy. All the dialogue is there. Very well, chaps, carry on! But I warn future aspirants not to be deceived. Speaking to them in the infuriating tones of a wise uncle, as one who has known the toil of getting an *Alice* into the theatre—this was prehistoric—I can tell them how hard it is: hard to keep faith with Carroll, and at the same time to make the thing theatrical, not merely a run of charades. Felicity Douglas has managed the continuity of the *Looking-Glass* so well that she ought not to smudge her work by those feebly groping extra lyrics.

These aside, the *Alice* ought to have had everything in it for success: Binnie Hale crying Ha, ha among the trumpets as that whinnying Red Queen; Margaret Rutherford, the White Queen, dithering about like a stricken space-ship in a fog; Carol Marsh, with Alice's wide-eyed interest; Michael Denison (in the evening's truest performance) as the gravely indomitable White Knight. Sets and costumes are unharmed Tenniel. Then what is wrong? Somehow the *Alice*, in spite of its excellent qualities, has not settled down into the right mixture. It may as the run proceeds and the bottle is shaken more often. You all know what the final taste should be like (as it was in Wonderland): "a sort of mixed flavour of cherry tart, custard, pineapple, roast turkey, toffee and hot buttered toast."

Angels in Love
(*Savoy*)

CEDRIC ERROL, Mrs. Hodgson Burnett's Little Lord Fauntleroy, was a good boy. He had golden curls and a lace collar. For these reasons he has become a horrid legend, a revue-sketch ghoul. It is some years since I read the book or saw the play, but I don't remember that Cedric was as grim as all that. Hugh Mills, who has now resolved to present a grown-up Fauntleroy, the little man married but with Dearest (his mother) still beside him, has assumed, I suppose, that everyone knows the book. I doubt this.

Anyway, after an exceedingly dull first scene—which invites us to laugh at Fauntleroy's ignorance of the facts of life—*Angels in Love* becomes a mildly amusing late Victorian burlesque without any special Hodgson Burnett affiliations. Henry Kendall lays down a pompous proposal of marriage; Peter Reynolds is comically apt as a fussy little man with an untidy trick of murdering people—one of those habits it is hard to break; there is fun with a poisoned teacup, and Kynaston Reeves, as the Earl of Dorincourt, a gunpowder-magazine looking for a match, can join the firm of Cattermole and Spettigue. "Dearest" is a flat part: we are glad that Barbara Kelly's personality can aerate it. Peter Hammond deals with Fauntleroy. I was surprised, on leaving the Savoy, to find that it was still quite early. The play, I felt, had lasted a very long time.

BRIGHT YOUNG MEN OF THE THEATRE—2: JOHN NEVILLE

John Neville was taken to the Old Vic when he was a boy. It was the first time he had seen a play, and it cost fourpence; applying his pocket money to this excellent cause, he went again on his own. And again. And now, no longer a grubby boy in the pit, he has stepped behind the footlights of the Vic this season to play Bertram in *All's Well That Ends Well*, the Dauphin in *King John*, Orsino in *Twelfth Night*, and smaller parts in *Hamlet* and *Coriolanus*. In between, after a spell in the Royal Navy as a signalman, came R.A.D.A., eighteen months with the Birmingham Rep., and three years at the Bristol Old Vic, growing steadily in technique and reputation. In between also has come marriage and a family; he has a son and a daughter of his own, and an adopted boy. The future is simple: "I want to act," he says.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by Houston Rogers.

CELEBRATION, by Sam J. Ntiro.
(R.B.A. Galleries. 101 gns.)

GIRL IN A STRIPED DRESS, by Daniel O'Ne
(Arthur Tooth and Sons. Sold.)

Around the Art Galleries

The pictures on this page represent a catholic selection. Four are by modern masters of established reputation ; four were shown in this year's annual exhibition of Young Contemporaries at the R.B.A. Galleries, where every year the walls are crowded with work by aspiring artists, many of them still students, a few of them, perhaps, the masters of the future.

The portrait, *Head*, by André Derain, is from the exhibition of French Paintings of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, which will remain at the Lefèvre Gallery, 30, Bruton Street, until March 27th, and which also includes, among other works, a fine Matisse, a Gauguin flower-painting, four Renoirs, and a Roualt nude. The pictures by Stanley Spencer, Daniel O'Neill and Tristram Hillier are from *To-day and Yesterday*, the exhibition at the gallery of Arthur Tooth and Sons, next door at 31, Bruton Street. This exhibition includes an Augustus John (foreshadowing the collection of his works that will be shown at Burlington House from March 13th under the ægis of the Royal Academy), and paintings by Matthew Smith, Graham Sutherland, Francis Bacon and other important English contemporaries.

We find especially interesting this juxtaposition of work by young and by established artists. Believing that most young painters learn from, and are influenced by painters of their own time, though of a different generation, we were tempted to entitle this selection "Masters and Pupils." Our readers may enjoy guessing for themselves the influences on the work of these young people.

GIRL IN CHECK BLOUSE, by J. S. Raynes.
(R.B.A. Galleries. 10 gns.)

HEAD, by André Derain.
(The Lefèvre Gallery. Sold.)

TRACK LAYING NO. 2, by Ian Tyson.
(R.B.A. Galleries. 5 gns.)

COOKHAM REGATTA SERIES, NO. I. PUNTS MEETING, by Stanley Spencer. (Arthur Tooth and Sons. Reserved.)

SELF-PORTRAIT, by John Booth. (R.B.A. Galleries. 4 gns.)

THE PADDLE STEAMER, by Tristram Hillier. (Arthur Tooth and Sons. £185.)

"Please Forward": by Joyce Dennys.

The Television Triangle

MY DEAR ROBERT,

Our local Library used to be the pride and joy of this place. A branch of a famous London one, it supplied us with books for many years and gave the town a reputation for culture which was not really deserved.

When, a few months ago, it packed up and went back to London, consternation reigned. "'Pon my word, Henrietta," said Colonel Simpkins, "if this sort of thing goes on I shall be forced to buy one of those Television Sets."

"I 've got T.V., Colonel," said Mrs. Whinebite, who has a habit of hovering on the outskirts of other people's conversations. "Why don't you Look In this evening?" and she bared her teeth in a tiger-smile.

. . . and she bared her teeth in a tiger-smile.

"Look In!" snorted Colonel Simpkins and stumped away.

Lady B. was not in the least dismayed by the Library desertion. "I 've always wanted to go in for a really intensive course of Trollope," she said, "but when you 're trying to keep up with the new books there simply isn't time. Now I shall begin."

The Conductor was so fired by Lady B.'s example he began a course of Dickens, and Faith made slow but steady progress through the works of Thackeray. The Admiral chose Sir Walter Scott.

It was a pity Colonel Simpkins started on Meredith who, as everybody knows, is practically unreadable, but they were the only books in the house and wouldn't have been there at all if their bindings hadn't happened to be the same colour as the drawing-room curtains. Little Mrs. Simpkins said it was terrible to see Colonel Simpkins sitting there, hour after hour, with a copy of *The Egoist* before him, never turning a page and muttering, "I don't know what this damned fellah's talking about."

At the end of three weeks he was only half-way through chapter one, and it was a relief to everybody when he finally succumbed to Mrs. Whinebite's pressing invitations and went to watch a television programme.

The next time I saw little Mrs. Simpkins she looked ten years younger. "My dear," she said, "it 's such a success! Dear Harold is as happy as a sand-boy, bless him! He 's only come home in a temper once, and that was because it was a soccer match, but since then he 's seen the All Blacks, and a most interesting talk on how to paper a room. So useful, Henrietta."

"Is Colonel Simpkins going to paper a room for you?" I asked, feeling there was more to T.V. than I had suspected.

"No, dear. But he says he can tell me exactly how to do it myself."

"It 's all very well, Henrietta," said Mrs. Savernack, who dropped in later with some fuchsia cuttings, "but I don't think it 's right. There they sit, hour after hour, in the dark——"

"Not the dark, surely?"

"You don't see the thing unless you turn out all the lights."

"I 'm sure Colonel Simpkins is to be trusted, Mrs. Savernack."

"No man is to be trusted," said Mrs. Savernack. "I saw him buying an enormous pink cyclamen in a pot yesterday."

"Perhaps it was for Mrs. Simpkins."

"Bah!" said Mrs. Savernack.

But when little Mrs. Simpkins came round one Sunday after supper and asked if she might spend the evening with us, she looked so woebegone I began to wonder whether there might not be grounds for Mrs. Savernack's suspicions after all. "I 'm very glad dear Harold has the Television to look at," she said, looking at us with wide-open china-blue eyes, "but of course it means I 'm alone a good deal. I don't mind week-days—it 's Sundays I can't bear."

"Couldn 't Colonel Simpkins stay at home on Sundays?"

"Oh, no, dear. It 's 'What 's My Line' on Sunday evenings."

"Is that a serial play?" said Charles.

"Good gracious, no!" said little Mrs. Simpkins, deeply shocked by Charles's ignorance. "It 's People who Come In. Unusual people, you know, like Lady Coalheavers."

"There aren't such things."

"Oh, but there are, Charles. Harold says so—Lady Coalheavers, and Gentlemen Baby-Sitters—all sorts of curious people doing unusual things, Harold says, and they have ten guesses."

"Who? The Lady Coalheavers?"

"No, dear, the Panel. Two very attractive young women. And everybody keeps waiting for Gilbert Harding to lose his temper."

. . . sitting in the dark with Mrs. Whinebite.

"And does he?"

"Not so far. Harold says you can see him exerting Iron Self Control. He says Gilbert Harding is an example to all men."

I thought of Colonel Simpkins sitting in the dark with Mrs. Whinebite, a muscle twitching in his jaw.

Little Mrs. Simpkins did three rows of Colonel Simpkins' sock without speaking. Then she said, in a low voice, "He calls her Prunella."

"But her name is Ethel."

"I know. That 's what makes it so awful," said little Mrs. Simpkins, and burst into tears.

When I told Lady B. about this she said something must be done at once, and the following Sunday she persuaded the Admiral, whose car is without a suppressor, to drive it to Mrs. Whinebite's house and sit there with the engine running. But Mrs. Whinebite's house, which is called "Winds," is in an exposed position and, after an hour of Sou'-Westerly gale and lashing rain, the Admiral decided he 'd had enough and drove home. Colonel Simpkins told Mrs. Simpkins the T.V. had gone quite mad and they 'd missed an hour of "Crime and Punishment," but there 'd be a repeat next evening at seven-thirty and not to bother about an early meal, because Prunella was preparing a Snack.

After that we knew Colonel and Mrs. Simpkins had simply got to have a television set of their own. As they couldn't possibly afford to buy one themselves, Lady B. started a fund so that we could buy one for them as a graceful acknowledgment of all Colonel Simpkins did as a Special Constable during the War. When Lady B. called at "Winds" for a subscription, Mrs. Whinebite gave her a Look and said she had nothing in the house, but Lady B. refused to budge from the doorstep and, finally, after a lot of chasing up and down stairs and saying she couldn't find her bag, Mrs. Whinebite produced a threepenny-bit. Lady B. says she considers it was a moral victory.

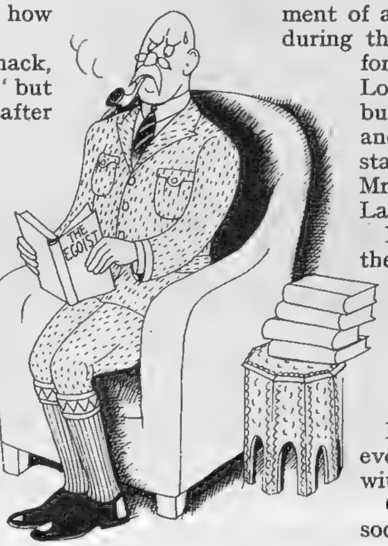
Everybody here is rather hard up just now, so the T.V. Fund progressed very slowly, but when Lady B. called at the Grange, the new people there, who are rolling, said they had a set they didn't want, and Lady B. could have that. The Fund paid for the aerial and carting it down to "Allahabad," which is the name of the Simpkins' house.

Little Mrs. Simpkins is happy again. Every evening she sits in the dark, watching television with Colonel Simpkins.

Colonel Simpkins says he 'll have to buy his socks ready-made now.

Always your affectionate Childhood's Friend,

HENRIETTA.



"I don't know what this damned fellah 's talking about."

Captain Kenneth Lynch and Mrs. Barbara Redman.

Captain T. Newberry and Mrs. Newberry.

Major Geoffrey Rust with Mrs. Rust.

Miss Patricia Smith and Mr. D. James.

Lieut. John Gammon proffering raffle tickets to Captain and Mrs. Hillerby and Captain and Mrs. Buckee.

Mrs. Bryan Thomas, Mrs. and Mr. Dennis Ball, Miss Rosemary Tivy and Mr. Bryan Thomas.

Lieut.-Col. Ronald Hudson and Lieut.-Col. Jack Prewett.

Mrs. G. B. Hodgkinson and Mr. W. W. E. Fulton.

Lieut. Bill Buckley and Mrs. Buckley.

T.A. Officers' Ball at Bristol

Bristol's Drill Hall, headquarters of the 312 H.A.A. (Gloucestershire) R.A. (T.A.) Regiment, was scarcely recognisable on February 5th, when the Regiment held its annual officers' ball there. The ball was given a realistically French atmosphere with the aid of metal tables shaded by coloured umbrellas and lighted by candles, French wallpapers decorating the walls and columns, a French-speaking compère and a traditionally French type of cabaret, complete with Can-Can. Organising genius for the evening was Lieut. Jimmy Doddrell, whose efforts were greatly admired, and everyone was extremely sorry that the Honorary Colonel of the Regiment, Lieut.-General Sir Charles Allfrey, was prevented by illness from attending this highly successful function.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by William Morris.

Whose Footsteps Tread Those Hallowed Places Now?

"Chops and Tomata Sauce"

A VISIT IN SEARCH OF MR. PICKWICK'S GHOST.

"My friend," said Mr. Pickwick, "you don't really mean to say that people live down in those wretched dungeons?"

". . . Live down there! Yes, and die down there too, wery often!" replied Mr. Roker; "and what of that?"

. . . The place was intolerably dirty, and the smell of tobacco smoke perfectly suffocating. There was a perpetual slamming and banging of doors as the people went in and out; and the noise of their voices and footsteps echoed and re-echoed through the passages constantly.

. . . Mr. Pickwick's heart was really too full to bear it, and he went upstairs to bed.

MY own heart was not full when I turned from Ludgate Circus into Farringdon Street, but my hands were blue, and my ears were red. My cold had reached its optimum velocity of three handkerchiefs a day, and I felt quite as miserable as Mr. Pickwick, as I went in search of his place of incarceration.

I did not find it. The Fleet Prison was pulled down in 1846. Sam Weller's anonymous man in brown (who was given a five-minute holiday after seventeen years' imprisonment to see the Fleet Market, and came back two minutes early, "*a-bilin' with rage: sayin' how he'd been nearly run over by a hackney coach*") would search for market and coaches in vain among the traffic that runs down the broad length of Farringdon Street.

We remember Pickwick. We remember the obstinate integrity that brought him to the Fleet. We remember the fidelity of Mr. Weller, junr., the jocularity of Mr. Weller, senr., the Vanity consumed hot with sugar and spices by Mrs. Weller and the Reverend Mr. Stiggins. We remember Jingle's tattered bravado:

"Can't step far—no danger of over-walking yourself here—Spike park—grounds pretty—romantic but not extensive—open for public inspection—family always in town—housekeeper desperately careful—very."

There never was, we remember, a more delicate man than Dodson, a more humane man than Fogg, when they arranged for Mrs. Bardell to join her sometime lodger. We remember them, and her, and all those others; we remember the Fleet, certainly, but do we ever think of it as having an existence outside the imaginary land between the covers of *The Pickwick Papers*?

ONE man for whom the Fleet exists in more than imagination is Constable B.260 of the City Police, who directed me to it. I had hoped to pick on someone who had no idea where the prison stood, but P.C. B.260 knows where almost every London prison stands; ancient buildings are his hobby. Not content with walking up and down Farringdon Street during the week—and a disappointingly law-abiding district it is, he says—he spends his week-ends tracking them around London on foot as a recreation from studying for police examinations.

So we walked together down Farringdon Street, and came to a plaque that read:

FARRINGDON MEMORIAL HALL
ACCOMMODATION
FOR
LARGE OR SMALL MEETINGS
ENQUIRE WITHIN

and *this* was the Fleet Prison. The Memorial Hall had been built on its site by the Congregational Union of England and Wales in memory of the separatist clergy who had suffered imprisonment there during the persecutions of the sixteenth century, before the Fleet became a debtors' prison.

From the drawing by Phiz.

Discovery of Jingle in the Fleet.

I skirted a pulpit in light oak, and looked for signs of life. A liftman appeared. I said I wanted to make some enquiries. "About the hall, is it?" he said.

"Yes, in a way."

"What do you want to hire it for?" he said. "Wait a minute, and I'll find someone." He disappeared, and I waited ten minutes until he came back with a friend.

"Want to hire a room, eh?" said the friend. I said that what I really wanted was permission to look around and soak up the atmosphere, and I thought the lift-man murmured something about its being further down the road, and past closing time, anyway. "Oh," said the friend, "Well, wait a minute." But I was used to this by now, and followed him—an angular Alice to his White Rabbit—along the twisting corridors of what was once the Fleet.

They are no longer damp and dirty; neon strip-lights have replaced the turnkey's candle. But they still turn sharply, and it is easy to imagine hidden dormitories where Mivins dances the horn-pipe, and Smangles forever pawns his smalls. At every turn there was a signboard, from which directional arrows pointed the way to new corridors and to the glass doors of offices, behind which efficient, friendly secretaries typed letters to Foreign Missions.

My guide had disappeared again. In front of me, a steel shaft of scaffolding ran up to the top floor, where the B.B.C. are taking over space for musical studios. Workmen hoisted materials up this shaft. A girl in green and a girl in red appeared from opposite ends of the corridor, crossed, and were swallowed up by other corridors. "Couple of long 'uns coming up, Fred," called the workman to his mate.

The heroes and helpers in our mechanised age wear neither shining armour nor white collars, and it was a calm man in overalls, carrying a box of tools, who now appeared and led me up to the second floor, setting in motion the executive mechanism that carried me, passing easily from one secretary to another, down to the ground floor again, where a final charming secretary gave me a pamphlet that answered all my historical questions. This was *The Memorial Hall and Its Story*, put out by the Congregational Press. I shall not refer to it. It has the names and the dates, certainly, but it seemed to me that I had found already what remained of the spirit of the Fleet as I had wandered, lost and alone like Mr. Pickwick during his evening peregrinations, about its corridors.

Farringdon Street is not a long street, and P.C. B.260 had reached the doors of the Hall again as I walked out into the air. Together we looked up at its Victorian Gothic front, soot-stained against the sky. "The architect who designed that ought to be made to live in it," he said.

Maybe he does, with all the other ghosts. JOHN BOWEN.

BOSCOE HOLDER:
For Agility and Artistic Talent.

At the New Watergate Theatre, the audience may see Mr. Holder on the stage (we see him *off* the stage at the right); his paintings on the walls in the bar (one is reproduced above). Mr. Holder comes from Trinidad, and many of his pictures are of that delightful island.

We Take Off Our Hat To . . .

BOSCOE HOLDER and his wife, SHEILA CLARKE.

HARRY MILLS: For Sparing No Expense to Spare His Neighbours' Feelings.

Mr. Mills is Head Porter at Kensington Mansions, Earl's Court. Wanting to combine a taste for the accordion with a distaste for annoying the people who live above him, he has bought a cosy second-hand telephone booth from the Postmaster-General, and plans to install it in his basement as a music-room in which to practise his scales. "It's the scales that worry people," he says.

THE RIGHT HON. R. A. BUTLER: For Exercising Deflationary Pressure in the Family.

When his ten-year-old daughter, Sarah, demanded a rise in pocket money, Mr. Butler, " the Lucius Junius Brutus of his age," conceded the rise, but insisted that half the total amount should be applied to savings. The matter seems to have been arranged without calling in Sir Walter Monckton!

GRETA WATSON:
For Rising to an Occasion.

Miss Watson is twenty-two years old, and she understudies Vivien Leigh in *The Sleeping Princess*. When Miss Leigh broke her wrist recently, Greta took over for two nights, and played to considerable critical acclaim. Miss Leigh is now well enough to play the part again, and Greta has nobly resisted the temptation to make a butterslide outside the stage door!

TELEVISION TOPICS: By CYRIL BUTCHER

With Shining Morning Face...

FOR the past month, every working day, I have been back to school—and it has not only been instructive, but great fun. If anyone should express a pious hope that I have been taking a refresher course in English composition, and that henceforth my syntax and punctuation will show a marked improvement, they will be disappointed. In fact, I have just taken the B.B.C.'s Producer's Course. This is held about three times a year and is aimed to ensure an adequate supply of those-who-know-how, in order to satisfy the increasing productive hunger of British television.

We were a mixed bunch. There were several talented people who are already in the Corporation and aim to make a painless transition from Sound to Vision. There were established theatre producers like Joan Swinstead, Chloë Gibson, and that superb actor, André Van Gyseghem, who is no stranger to regular viewers. There was a film director, David Macdonald, whose credits make a formidable list and who made that unforgettable picture *Desert Victory*. There were overseas pupils from Canada, Holland and Germany—and there was your humble servant, C.B.

But we were all mad enthusiasts, only too happy to put ourselves under the head-tutelage of Royston Morley, a brilliant producer and one of the pioneers of television. He has been responsible for much of the work that has caused the medium to rise from a "gimmick" to a social force that must be taken seriously. If, as a result of this course, I manage to follow adequately in my master's footsteps, I shall be very pleased.

But it's rather fun sitting on both sides of the fence, and during the same period I attended a Press conference given by Cecil McGivern, Controller of Television Programmes. Mr. McGivern gives the lie to the accusation that the British work with one eye on the clock and the other on the inevitable cup of tea. There seems to be no hour of the day when he is not to be found in his office and very few programmes go on the air which are not subjected to the eagle scrutiny of his eye. Well, he told a goodly bunch of us the general outlines of the coming quarter's programmes. The daily Press has already covered most of the major points, but one heartening fact escaped mention. It is that the "minority" programmes: opera, ballet and the sort of play aimed above the moron's head, are steadily being more appreciated by the general public.

MY scholastic activities have played absolute havoc with the past fortnight's viewing, so please forgive a mixed bag.

Dark Sonnet, an operatic monologue, made of Eugene O'Neill's *Before Breakfast*, by Erik Chisholm, lingers in my memory, chiefly for a very daring use of the sweeping camera by the Dennis Vance–Patricia Foy team and for the feat of singing by Noreen Berry—even while smoking a cigarette—to some very ugly music.

Less esoteric but much more pleasant to the senses, I found *Music for You*, which genial maestro Eric Robinson has, during the past three years, worked up into one of the more satisfying light-entertainment shows. This particular edition created something of a sensation by introducing to the British public Jacqueline Delman, a young soprano of staggering beauty with a voice that matches her face. I was also very happy with the fresh lift given to the programme by Eric Fawcett's production and the choreography of a short ballet, by David Paltenghi, which made well-patterned use of that tricky thing: the long-shot.

ROYSTON MORLEY.

YVONNE MITCHELL.

BARBARA KELLY.

NED SHERRIN.

T.V. PERSONALITIES: ROYSTON MORLEY has produced many of Television's greatest successes. Now he is pausing in his career to teach others how to do it, but he will be returning to production in a few weeks' time. The appearance of YVONNE MITCHELL on a television screen is always an event. She is an actress of considerable force, and, though she is well able to apply the light touch, as in *The Jewels*, she is particularly well known for her appearances in heavier parts. BARBARA KELLY has firmly entrenched herself in the affections of viewers as an astute and friendly member of the *What's My Line?* panel, though she, too, is an accomplished dramatic actress, we remember. The confident young man who completes this foursome is NED SHERRIN, an undergraduate of Exeter College, Oxford, who has been chiefly responsible for organising the Oxford Revue, which is to be televised on Friday, February 26th.

Clementina, C. A. Lejeune's serialisation of the A. E. W. Mason novel, promises lots of excitement. The plot is perhaps a shade too complicated for Saturday night viewing, but as long as everybody goes on plotting and indulging in sword and horse-play, I don't suppose there will be any complaints.

I don't usually review television excerpts from ice shows—they can get their free publicity elsewhere—but *Sinbad the Sailor* is an exception and a "must." For in it Norman Wisdom demonstrates the apparently limitless extent of his artistry. Who but a genius could be equally effective in the intimacy of the television close-up and the vast extent of the ice stage?

On the same night I saw Winston Clewes' adaptation of the de Maupassant story, *The Jewels*, and again the word "genius" must be used. It must be applied to that startling young producer Dennis Vance, who seems able to spring a glad surprise on the viewer each time he does a show. In this case he told the story almost entirely in terms of big-head close-ups against a black background. It was a trick which heightened the performances of Yvonne Mitchell and Dennis Price and almost disguised the thinness of the script.

MR. VANCE seems to be indefatigable, for on March 9 he will be producing a dance-drama called *Four O'Clock in the Morning Blues*, which also promises to be somewhat unusual. It revolves within the orbit of the night-club world and shows us what febrile lives its workers lead. Jo and Marie, two adagio dancers, are about to break up their act and their marriage after twelve years of ups and downs together. In a series of flashbacks, told in terms of nightmarish montages, dances and songs, we are told how all this has come to happen. Should be interesting if nothing else.

Coming back to February, the 28th (repeat March 4th) brings *Such Men are Dangerous*, by Alfred Neumann, adapted by Ashley Dukes. This well-known play, set in St. Petersburg in the year 1801, tells of the scheming of Count Pahlen, the Governor of Petersburg, to dethrone the mad Czar Paul I., and to put in his place the vacillating Czarevitch Alexander. Whatever its accuracy as an historical document, there is no doubt about the dramatic quality of this play. To call it "strong meat" is to be guilty of understatement.

On March 5th there is to be a documentary which promises much in the way of visual effect. It is called *Fashion Story* (script by Pamela Search), and takes us behind the glittering façade of that industry which is dedicated to the ornamentation of the female of the species. This will be preceded, four days earlier—on the 1st of March—by a real fashion display, demonstrating the handiwork of the Top Twelve.

Personality Parade—18

PETER BROUGH

Photographed by Baron Studios.

"A mild schizophrenic" is Peter Brough's own description of himself. "I don't talk to Archie when we 're on stage—he talks to me." But off-stage, the quiet, humorous, gently-spoken half of this highly successful team does all the talking while his unnaturally silent little partner rests £250 worth of wooden head on a chair-back, a completely blank look on his painted face. Peter Brough's career as a ventriloquist began when he was six years of age, the third generation voice-thrower in the Brough family, and he faced his first large audiences when he performed in school concerts in London. Later, there were other shows—when he was in the R.A.F. during the war, odd radio "spots" and music-hall tours after it. The popularity of the team has been steadily increasing over the ten years of its existence and has an immense following among children and adults throughout the country and, indeed, throughout the world: fifty-five records are made of every broadcast, for relaying over radio stations in other countries. And nowadays it takes three secretaries to keep up with Archie's fan-mail: the slightly smug look that he occasionally has on his face undoubtedly arises from that—and the knowledge that the estimable "Brough" has had him insured for the sum of £10,000!

AT THE CINEMA with C. A. LEJEUNE

Nitro-Glycerine and a Dynamite Blonde

Calamity Jane

(*Warner*)

THIS film belongs to the school of *Oklahoma* and *Annie Get Your Gun*, and I haven't seen a musical I enjoyed so much for seasons.

You may remember Calamity Jane as Jean Arthur played her in Cecil B. de Mille's classic Western, *The Plainsman*. That was grand. But it seems that the real Calamity Jane was a songbird as well as a hard-riding, fast-shooting frontier girl. If she put over her numbers with half the vitality of Doris Day, or looked half as fetching in an old Army cap and deerhide tunic, she must have packed the boys into the saloon at Deadwood City. The film begins with Miss Day bringing home the Deadwood Stage Coach with a rattling number that ends among the bottles in the bar; and this is only the first of half-a-dozen catchy new tunes, including *Windy City* and *The Black Hills of Dakota*. (If you don't know them yet, you soon will.)

Calamity is given to boasting—she announces she has saved the stage-coach from a hundred Indians—and the story, such as it is, tells how she commits herself to bringing Deadwood's favourite pin-up girl from Chicago to perform in the local theatre. When Miss Day has done a great deal of riding and singing and leaping about, with a vitality suggesting a mixture of Peter Pan, Robin Hood and Jack the Giant Killer, things are brought to a satisfactory conclusion with "Calam" at the altar, fixed up in "female clothes" and revealed as "a passable purty girl."

Her bridegroom is Wild Bill Hickock, the only man in Deadwood who can draw a gun faster than she can. As Howard Keel plays and sings him, he seems in every way a suitable pardner; and there is a nice, sharp performance from newcomer Allyn McLerie as the lady from Chicago. The film gallops along at a splendid pace. I'd gladly go to see it again, any day.

The Wages of Fear

(*Academy*)

H. G. CLOUZOT'S film, *Le Salaire de la Peur*, which won the Grand Prix at last year's Cannes Festival, is a little masterpiece of suspense and excitement. By "little" I don't mean short; it runs, in fact, for 130 minutes, which is generous footage even by modern standards. What I mean is, rather, small. The plot is as thin as baby ribbon, and the greater part of the film deals with no more than four characters.

The Wages of Fear is not a cheerful work, and it leaves behind a taste of bitterness as well as a limp sense of exhaustion. I am inclined to think that Clouzot takes a bit too long laying out his scene; but he is reported as having said that he kept the opening deliberately slow, as a contrast to the gruelling pace that follows.

The scene is a sun-baked oil-town, somewhere in Central America, where a group of down-and-outs of all nationalities are united in one thing only—their desire to get out. But they can't get out, because they have no money, and the only jobs are in the hands of S.O.C., a big American oil company. One day news comes that an oil well in the mountains has caught fire. High explosives are needed in a hurry to blow it up. From the local riff-raff S.O.C. chooses four volunteers, to drive a couple of trucks loaded with nitro-glycerine across 300 miles of treacherous country. The danger money is high, and so is the danger. A single slip or jolt on the surface of the primitive mountain roads will send both driver and his mate to kingdom come.

Into the picture of this journey, its natural hazards and personal instabilities, the director packs more breath-taking excitement than one could believe possible. He is helped by the playing of four powerful actors—Charles Vanel, Yves Montand (better known as a singer), Folco Lulli and Peter van Eyck—as the strongly characterised drivers, who fit without faltering into the grim pattern that destiny decrees.

THE WAGES OF FEAR. Yves Montand as Mario hauls Charles Vanel as Jo from a crater of oil. Vanel was awarded the Prize for the Best Actor at the 1953 Cannes Film Festival for this performance.

Other New Films

THE WEAK AND THE WICKED.—Adapted from Joan Henry's book, *Who Lie in Gaol*, this British film shows us something of the regiment of life in women's prisons, both those with and without bars. The trouble with it is that the director seems to have been unable to make up his mind whether to treat it documentarily, romantically or hilariously. The result is a distracting mixture of all three styles, with Glynis Johns, as a well-bred girl who has been framed by the gambling-club owner to whom she owes money, trying to pick her way along a straight path through it. The scene most likely to be remembered is the one in which Athene Seyler and Sybil Thorndike, as two dear old ladies, decide to eliminate A. E. Matthews with weed-killer. The incident is brilliantly acted and quite preposterous, and might have come straight out of some intimate revue.

CEASE FIRE.—This 3-D film is not what we should call a documentary here, but it gets close to the Hollywood understanding of the term. It was produced and photographed entirely on the battlefields of Korea. It is acted by serving soldiers, and describes a minor patrol action, with a few casualties, on the day before the official and long-delayed Cease Fire. The 3-D photography (in black-and-white for the first time) certainly gives us a clear idea of the sort of country in which the boys at Korea fought, but I am not entirely convinced that 2-D photography couldn't have done it just as well, or even better. There is much in the film to admire, including a hint that someone about the place had read *All Quiet on the Western Front*. But, honestly, *need* the Celestial Choir have stuck so doggedly to that monotonous theme-song, "Onward and onward and onward and onward. . . ."? It gives one a shocking Monday-morning feeling, which I'm sure isn't the impression the producers meant to convey.

THEY WHO DARE.—Roughly based on fact, this belated war-film is about a raiding party of the Special Boat Service, landed on enemy-occupied Rhodes to sabotage two airfields hampering Allied lines of communication in North Africa. In spite of a good deal of blundering by the commanding officer (Dirk Bogarde) and poetry reading by his corporal (Denholm Elliott) the mission succeeds, without the loss of more than eight out of the ten original characters. Direction is by Lewis Milestone, who gets a true feeling of the island background sometimes, but rarely whips up the sort of audience participation which, to my mind, can alone justify a film of this sort so long after the event.

YOU KNOW WHAT SAILORS ARE.—There is a type of homely comedy which British studios do supremely well, and there is a type of slap-and-tickle farce which they do embarrassingly badly. This story of a drunken naval officer who rivets an old pram and a pawnbroker's sign to the deck of a foreign warship, and is consequently abducted into a harem by the foreign potentate, would seem to belong to the latter class. Even Naunton Wayne and Dora Bryan can make little of this sort of joke, and Donald Sinden seems perpetually overwhelmed by waves of discreetly underclad but quite unexotic maidens. I found myself a bit overwhelmed by the whole thing.

THE GLENN MILLER STORY.—James Stewart and June Allyson make this a thoroughly likeable film, even for persons as musically uneducated as myself, who can detect little difference between the right sound and the wrong one.

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Our Spring Fashion Portfolio

by NORAH OWEN

Town Favourite

Tweed is still top favourite for town wear, and a tweed dress will be right for a hundred-and-one occasions in Spring and early Summer. This figure-fitting dress, in pale, flecked tweed, has a high bodice and clings to the ribs in the Season's approved line. There is a tiny cape to warm your shoulders on cooler days. By Frederick Starke, about 21 gns., from Peter Jones, London; Cavendish House, Cheltenham. The burnt straw bonnet, black velvet trimmed, by Condor.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by Denis Hughes-Gilbey. Drawings by John Weston.

OUR SPRING FASHION PORTFOLIO (continued)

On The Race-Course

The way we dress has changed with the change in our way of living. In days of riches and leisure we dressed with ornate extravagance. Nowadays we rush from place to place, and our clothes are streamlined and simplified to speed us on. Race-courses used to be a background for frills and furbelows and parasols. Now we wear tailored silk or lace suits, simple dresses in colourful fabrics and matching dresses and coats to suit our unreliable weather.

One of the most attractive and useful fashions of the moment—and it should prove to be a lasting one—is the two-piece, with a full-length coat, lined with the same fabric as the dress beneath. A winning outfit for so many occasions in a busy woman's life, including the less formal race-meetings, is (*above*) Matita's soft brown wool and nylon, sheath-like coat, lined with the brown-and-white printed cotton that makes (*right*) a slim-fitting summer dress. Price about 42 gns., from Peter Jones, London; and Peggy Goss, Birmingham. The natural straw hat is by Condor.

An urbane and charming dress that will be a favourite throughout the season. Ideal for formal race meetings, garden-parties, weddings and other social occasions, in gros-grain printed in black or in navy on white, this dress has a fitting bodice, with a wide neckline, and a full skirt. By Lady in Black, price about 16½ gns., from Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge and Bournemouth; Griffin and Spalding, Nottingham. The white satin hat is a Condor model.

OUR SPRING FASHION PORTFOLIO (continued)

Two-Way Coat

The coat that leads a double life, that can conceal beneath its tailored simplicity a slim, fitting dress, can also on warmer days be worn as a dress. This fashion revival should be popular in these days of abbreviated wardrobes and constant air-travel. Seen here in navy-and-white (also in black-and-white) checked, woven gros-grain, price approximately £25, from the Coat Department, Marshall and Snelgrove, London ; Bon Marché, Liverpool. The navy-and-white sailor hat is a "Town and Country" model by Hugh Beresford.

The suit

The dress

Threesome

Two separate outfits which can successfully combine to form a basic wardrobe for high summer or a warmer climate. A cream lace suit, mounted over stiff silk, has a straight skirt and fitted jacket, with rounded shoulders. There is a matching slender evening dress, with kick pleats at the back of the skirt, and a swathed band of snuff-coloured chiffon round the top. This dress can be worn with the suit-jacket for " covered-up " evenings, dinner or theatre parties. All by Sylvia Mills, from Harvey Nichols, London ; County Clothes, Cheltenham ; and Vera Morgan, Blackpool. Approximate prices : Suit, 19 gns ; Dress, 23 gns. ; Dress and Jacket, 42 gns. The hat with the suit is a dark pink straw, by Madge Chard.

The dress and jacket

OUR SPRING FASHION PORTFOLIO (continued)

Little Evenings

Left : Rich, dark kingfisher blue for a cocktail or dinner dress in shot, mounted taffeta. The neckline is wide and cut low, and the bodice is lavishly embroidered. There is a neat, tailored belt, and a full skirt with pockets on the hips. By Frank Usher, price about £21 10s. from Jay's, London ; Henderson's, Liverpool ; and Carl of Leeds.

Below : This is a season of prints in strong, beautiful colours. Printed shantung, in green, pink and blue on a natural ground, is used for this striking princess dress, for summer parties and the theatre. A loose, full-sleeved, shantung coat (*left, below*) in the green that predominates in the dress print makes, with the dress, a summery two-piece. By Elizabeth Henry, price about 40 gns., from Rocha, Grafton Street ; and Brown Muff, Bradford. The pill-box cap in draped chiffon, jewel-decked, is a Condor model.

In the Grand Manner

White lace, white net and white satin all mingle together in this traditional ball dress for a débutante or a young woman. The lace bodice, strapless and edged with appliqued satin, flows into a pointed apron-front, also edged with satin, over layers of nylon net. By Mary Black, price about 45 gns., from Dickins and Jones, London; McDonalds, Harrogate; Barrance and Ford, Brighton.

OUR SPRING FASHION PORTFOLIO (continued)

Elegant Economy

Wool jersey, ever in the news, and the perfect fabric for our cool climate. A trim, little run-around dress in checks in shades of brown and beige, with cuffed three-quarter sleeves, a button-through bodice, high, round neck and straight skirt with a back pleat. By Marcusa, price 9 gns., from Hunt's, New Bond Street; Kendal Milne, Manchester; and Taylor's, Bristol. The natural straw hat, with brown snakeskin band, is by Madge Chard.

SPRING BEAUTY NEWS

FOR LASTING YOUTH. The facial treatment invented by Dr. Bogomoletz, that preserves and, if necessary, regains a youthful appearance for the skin, is now available in this country. This "*Externe*" treatment maintains the working order of the connective tissue, one of the skin layers, which is, in fact, an endocrine gland, and is a life-giving and preserving organ.

The "Externe" treatment—a Cleansing Lotion, which really cleanses; "Day" Externe, a foundation cream; and "Night" Externe, which is the really active element, are available in a coffret, price 58s. 6d., which lasts about three months, from the Army and Navy, and other leading Stores.

PUFF-PUFF. An old favourite, *Elizabeth Arden's* "Blue Grass" Dusting Powder, is now packed into pretty pink containers, like tiny concertinas. When squeezed gently, out comes a fragrant cloud spray of powder. Puff-Puff Dusting Powder, ideal for travel, costs 6s. 9d.

HAND CARE. The colder the weather, the grubbier one's hands seem to get, and icy winds and constant washing leave hands looking rough and unattractive. Hand-cream is something that should be used generously, and put on every time the hands are dried after they have been in water. A hand-cream that is reasonably enough priced for this lavish use is *Nulon*, 1s. 7d. and 2s. 6d. a bottle. Pink and scented, it is rich and creamy, but not sticky.

FRENCH ACCENT. A hair-streak that is glamorous and yet easy to apply, is *French Accent*, 7s. 6d., by French of London, and available in his Salon at 4, Curzon Place. It is a metallic liquid, applied as easily as nail-varnish, to emphasise a curl or to streak from the forehead. You remove it by vigorous brushing, part of your hair routine.

Two-timers

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MOTORING with WILLIAM HARTLEY

The Only Real Cure for Road Accidents

ROAD SAFETY is a topic that is much before us and is likely to remain so. Everyone will agree that the number of people killed and injured on our roads is a tragedy of the first order; yet I believe that the whole subject has still to be tackled objectively.

It is rarely pointed out that the present-day figures are not as bad, relatively, as they might be. The vast increase in the number of motorists must be taken into account. In one city—Birmingham—there are now more than 65,000 private cars registered, as opposed to 37,000 in 1935 and to 50,000 in 1938. For commercial vehicles, the figures show an even greater increase. Fewer than 10,000 in 1935, they rose to 11,500 in 1938 and to the tremendous figure of 29,000 last year. Probably most areas can show a similar increase. So accident figures might reasonably have been expected to rise in like proportion, and no doubt they would have done so, were it not for the efforts that have been made to prevent them.

But that fact should not make us accept the present-day tragedy. A great deal more can be done to reduce accidents, and that is where I am at variance with many people.

In recent weeks I have noted what several bodies and individuals have to say on this subject, and I regard as pathetic the suggestions that have been high-lighted as answers to the problem. Some of the Road Safety committees are guilty of the most petty of these ideas, and others stem from individuals up and down the country. Some people, I see, are convinced that side-lights are not bright enough on cars! Elsewhere I read that many cars on the road to-day are in dangerous condition—in spite of the fact that only a very small proportion of accidents are caused through any mechanical defect.

We hear on all sides that the state of our roads is to blame for the accident rate. Without quoting figures as to the number of times road defects actually cause accidents, I am sure that this is over-blamed. After all, any reasonable driver will regulate his speed according to the condition of the roads.

I have even seen cat's-eyes, that wartime innovation that has proved such a blessing, blamed for accidents. The suggestion is that drivers put too much faith in them. But experienced motorists know that cat's-eyes get closer together as a corner is approached and thus provide additional warning.

Experience is, of course, the key to the problem. There are a good many people involved in road safety one way or another who are not themselves highly experienced motorists. True, they may own cars and drive them, but they have not got that vast experience of driving and road behaviour that only the professional expert can have.

We must look to the police first for such knowledge, and for an example. A man who has been through the advanced driving course at a police school really knows how to drive a car. Look at the Metropolitan Police record. One accident per 71,000 miles—and "accident" includes the merest scratch which most of us would ignore!

I see that getting on for half the people who take the driving test register a failure! That is itself a warning. I imagine that too many fail to make use of the approved schools, whose record is much better than that overall figure. But even then, does the driving test really produce a good driver?

The Duke of Richmond and Gordon (*right*) presenting the Ferodo Trophy on February 3rd to Mr. William Lyons, Chairman and Managing Director of Jaguar Cars, Ltd., of Coventry. The trophy was inaugurated last July for the most outstanding British contribution of the year to the sport of motor-racing. At the Le Mans 24-hours Race of 1953, the Jaguar team finished first, second and fourth. Associated with Jaguar Cars, Ltd., in the award were the Dunlop Rubber Co., Ltd., for the part played by their disc brakes in the Le Mans victory.

Even were we all experienced drivers, the road behaviour of pedestrians and cyclists would remain a major problem. If ever legislation was wanted in a good cause, some form of control is wanted here—and I speak as a pedestrian myself.

But in the main a much more realistic tackling of the whole question is needed. No more fiddling about with side-lights, with parking near crossings, or with winking beacons. No more of these piffling bee-in-the-bonnet ideas that one reads of almost every day as being the answer to the problem. A real improvement in road behaviour by every road-user must be achieved.

How? Well, it is easy to criticise so I will venture to be constructive. I seriously suggest that a more Christian outlook when using the roads would help a great deal, simply by making us all more tolerant, and more considerate towards each other. We should do unto others as we would be treated ourselves. Always be aware of the other man.

In practical terms, this means a constant watch in the driving mirror, so much neglected by most drivers. The police regard this as their third eye and use it constantly. Always be certain that everyone else in the vicinity knows just what you are about before you alter course or speed.

The need for consideration applies to drivers, cyclists, walkers and everyone. And, to repeat myself, tinkering about with speed limits here and there, the height of one's lamps from the ground, and the position of cat's-eyes will get us nowhere. And since we don't learn very readily, nothing but a tough policy from people who are themselves really expert will lead to that happier state of affairs.

Lagondas at Le Mans

I LEARN with great interest that Lagondas are to be represented in the Le Mans 24-hours Race this year. This is exciting news. The two cars that have been entered will be powered with 4½-litre engines of new design, and they are in quite an advanced state of development. Other details are not yet available, but the Lagondas will undoubtedly be very fast—or "potent," as the current phrase has it.

This brings visions of an interesting situation in the race, already one that never lacks incident. Mr. David Brown's stable will be represented by two makes, Aston Martin and Lagonda. Since the Lagondas are expected to be the faster, they may well set up a really cracking pace in the early stages of this long event, with the Astons plugging away behind. If the opposition is tempted into giving hot pursuit to the Lagondas, they may, as has happened before, crack in the process. Even if the Lagondas fail to hold their place, the Astons will possibly benefit from the elimination of part of the opposition.

Well, this is all only supposition. The opposition is powerful indeed. Nevertheless, the David Brown concern may be expected to benefit from this new and courageous venture.

It all means interest and it also means that there are now three industrialists who are backing motor-racing in this very active way. A. G. B. Owen is going ahead with new B.R.M. cars, but will keep the present cars in active use whenever and wherever possible. He has even purchased a Maserati of the latest type to enable his team of drivers to take part in this season's Formula 1 events until the new B.R.M.s are ready.

Mr. Vandervell with his Ferrari completes this trio. One should also include Mr. William Lyons with his Jaguars to make the quartet, but cars are his sole business, while the other three are engaged in other engineering work. Anyway, it shows a fine spirit, and while they can't all win, I wish them luck and may the honours be well shared.

A Clean Sweep

A VERY handy and inexpensive gadget for the motorist is the Cleanascreen tool for (obviously) cleaning the windscreen. I've tried one out and found it very handy over many miles in dirty weather. It's simply a piece of sponge-rubber mounted on a handle, with a hard rubber squeegee on the reverse side. Working the sponge over the dirty glass after dipping in even a muddy roadside pool, and then cleaning off with the squeegee really cleans the glass. And the handle ensures that the whitest gloves will not get dirty while carrying out the job. A well-spent 7s. 6d., in my view.

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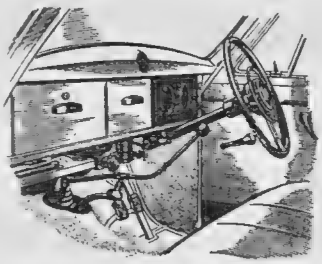

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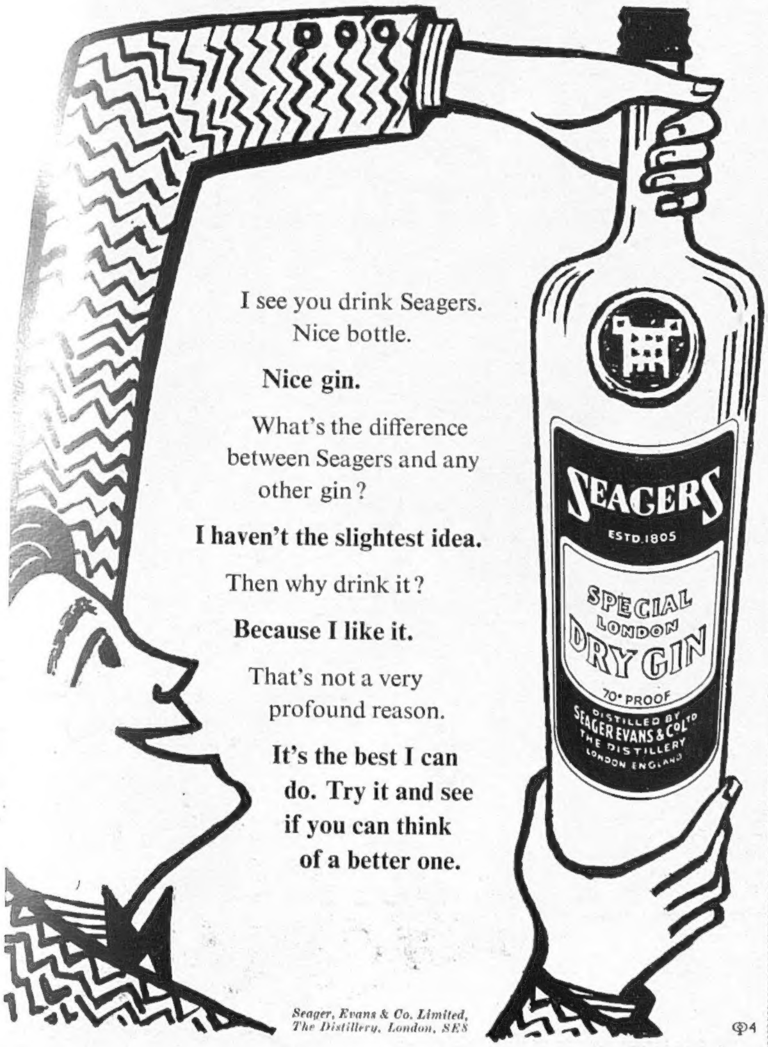

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